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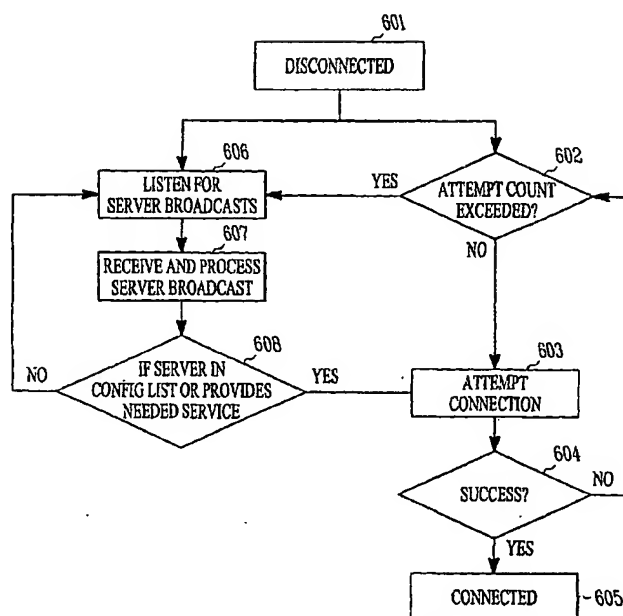
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(54) Title: WAGERING GAME SERVER AVAILABILITY BROADCAST MESSAGE SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: A computerized wagering game system includes a gaming module operable to conduct a wagering game on which monetary value can be wagered, and a network module operable to detect a wagering game network server availability broadcast signal. The network module connects to the wagering game network server identified in the availability broadcast signal, and authenticates the identity of the wagering game network server.

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WAGERING GAME SERVER AVAILABILITY BROADCAST MESSAGE SYSTEM

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Related Applications

This patent application claims the priority benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/743,259 filed February 9, 2006 and entitled "HOST ADVERTISING PROTOCOL", and of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial
10 No. 60/743,902 filed March 29, 2006 and entitled "WAGERING GAME NETWORK SERVER AVAILABILITY BROADCAST MESSAGE SYSTEM", which applications are incorporated herein by reference.

Field of the Invention

15 The invention relates generally to computerized wagering game systems, and more specifically to wagering game systems operable to process a wagering game server broadcast signal.

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Background

Computerized wagering games have largely replaced traditional mechanical wagering game machines such as slot machines, and are rapidly being adopted to
30 implement computerized versions of games that are traditionally played live such as poker and blackjack. These computerized games provide many benefits to the game

owner and to the gambler, including greater reliability than can be achieved with a mechanical game or human dealer, more variety, sound, and animation in presentation of a game, and a lower overall cost of production and management.

The elements of computerized wagering game systems are in many ways the same as the elements in the mechanical and table game counterparts in that they must be fair, they must provide sufficient feedback to the game player to make the game fun to play, and they must meet a variety of gaming regulations to ensure that both the machine owner and gamer are honest and fairly treated in implementing the game. Further, they must provide a gaming experience that is at least as attractive as the older mechanical gaming machine experience to the gamer, to ensure success in a competitive gaming market.

Computerized wagering games do not rely on the dealer or other game players to facilitate game play and to provide an entertaining game playing environment, but rely upon the presentation of the game and environment generated by the wagering game machine itself. Incorporation of audio and video features into wagering games to present the wagering game, to provide help, and to enhance the environment presented are therefore important elements in the attractiveness and commercial success of a computerized wagering game system. Music and environmental effects are also played through speakers in some wagering game systems to enhance or complement a theme of the wagering game. These sounds typically accompany video presentation of the wagering game on a screen, which itself often includes animation, video, and three-dimensional graphics as part of presentation of the wagering game.

Many computerized wagering game systems are coupled via a network, so that the games can communicate with a server or with one another. In one such example, a central server performs a variety of functions such as accounting, providing updated software to the wagering game systems, and coordinating group games such as progressive slot games.

But, configuration of a wagering game machine on a network requires a degree of configuration and setup beyond simply plugging in a traditional wagering game machine and turning it on. Managing configuration of a wagering game

network and the associated devices is therefore an important element of operating a wagering game facility.

Summary

5 One example embodiment of the invention comprises a computerized wagering game system includes a gaming module operable to conduct a wagering game on which monetary value can be wagered, and a network module operable to detect a wagering game network server availability broadcast signal. Another embodiment comprises a wagering game network server operable to broadcast a
10 wagering game server availability signal over a wagering game network.

Brief Description of the Figures

Figure 1 shows a computerized wagering game machine, as may be used to practice some embodiments of the invention.

15 Figure 2 is a block diagram of a computerized wagering game machine as may be used to practice some embodiments of the invention.

Figure 3 is a diagram of a wagering game system network comprising a wagering game network server and wagering game machines, as may be used to practice some embodiments of the invention.

20 Figure 4 is a flowchart of a method of processing wagering game network server broadcast availability messages in which the wagering game machine listens for broadcast messages before attempting a connection, consistent with an example embodiment of the invention.

25 Figure 5 is a flowchart of a method of processing wagering game network server broadcast availability messages in which the wagering game machine may attempt to establish a connection before listening for broadcast messages, consistent with an example embodiment of the invention.

30 Figure 6 is a flowchart of a method of processing wagering game network server broadcast availability messages in which the methods of Figures 4 and 5 are conducted in parallel, consistent with an example embodiment of the invention.

Detailed Description

In the following detailed description of example embodiments of the invention, reference is made to specific example embodiments of the invention by way of drawings and illustrations. These examples are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention, and serve to illustrate how the invention may be applied to various purposes or embodiments. Other embodiments of the invention exist and are within the scope of the invention, and logical, mechanical, electrical, and other changes may be made without departing from the subject or scope of the present invention. Features or limitations of various embodiments of the invention described herein, however essential to the example embodiments in which they are incorporated, do not limit other embodiments of the invention or the invention as a whole, and any reference to the invention, its elements, operation, and application do not limit the invention as a whole but serve only to define these example embodiments. The following detailed description does not, therefore, limit the scope of the invention, which is defined only by the appended claims.

In one example embodiment of the invention, a computerized wagering game system includes a gaming module operable to conduct a wagering game on which monetary value can be wagered, and a network module operable to detect a wagering game network server availability broadcast signal. In a further example, the network module connects to the wagering game network server identified in the availability broadcast signal, and authenticates the identity of the wagering game network server. Other embodiments of the invention include wagering game servers operable to broadcast wagering game network server availability messages; and systems comprising such servers and networked wagering game systems.

Figure 1 illustrates a computerized wagering game machine, as may be used to practice some embodiments of the present invention. The computerized gaming system shown generally at 100 is a video wagering game system, which displays information for at least one wagering game upon which monetary value can be wagered on video display 101. Video display 101 is in various embodiments a CRT display, a plasma display, an LCD display, a surface conducting electron emitter

display, or any other type of display suitable for displaying electronically provided display information. In some further embodiments, additional displays such as a bonus game display or top box display 102 are further operable to display electronically provided information to a wagering game player. Alternate
5 embodiments of the invention will have other game indicators, such as mechanical reels instead of the video graphics reels shown at 103 that comprise a part of a video slot machine wagering game.

A wagering game is implemented using software within the wagering game machine, such as through instructions stored on a machine-readable medium such as
10 a hard disk drive or nonvolatile memory. In some further example embodiments, some or all of the software stored in the wagering game machine is encrypted or is verified using a hash algorithm or encryption algorithm to ensure its authenticity and to verify that it has not been altered. For example, in one embodiment the wagering game software is loaded from nonvolatile memory in a compact flash
15 card, and a hash value is calculated or a digital signature is derived to confirm that the data stored on the compact flash card has not been altered. The game of chance implemented via the loaded software takes various forms in different wagering game machines, including such well-known wagering games as reel slots, video poker, blackjack, craps, roulette, or hold 'em games. In some further embodiments,
20 a secondary game or bonus game is displayed on the secondary display 102, or other information such as progressive slot information or other community game information is displayed.

The wagering game is played and controlled with inputs such as various buttons 104 or via a touchscreen overlay to video screen 101. The touchscreen is
25 used in some embodiments to display virtual buttons, which can have unique functions in some embodiments, or can duplicate the functions provided by the mechanical buttons 104 in other embodiments. In some alternate examples, other devices such as pull arm 105 used to initiate reel spin in this reel slot machine example are employed to provide other input interfaces to the game player. The
30 player interface components are in this example contained within or mechanically coupled to the wagering game system, but in other embodiments will be located

outside the wagering game system cabinet such as by a wired or wireless electronic connection to the wagering game system.

Monetary value is typically wagered on the outcome of the games, such as with tokens, coins, bills, or cards that hold monetary value. The wagered value is conveyed to the machine such as through a changer 106 or a secure user identification module interface 107, and winnings are returned such as via a returned value ticket, a stored value card, or through the coin tray 108. Sound is also provided through speakers 109, typically including audio indicators of game play, such as reel spins, credit bang-ups, and environmental or other sound effects or music to provide entertainment consistent with a theme of the computerized wagering game. In some further embodiments, the wagering game machine is coupled to a network, and is operable to use its network connection to receive wagering game data, track players and monetary value associated with a player, and to perform other such functions.

In other embodiments, the computerized wagering game system takes one or more other forms, such as a mobile or portable wagering game device, a server-based wagering game device, or a networked wagering game system. These other computerized wagering game system embodiments need not contain all features of the wagering game system of Figure 1, which does not limit the scope of a computerized wagering game but is provided as an example only.

Figure 2 shows a block diagram of an example embodiment of a wagering game system. The wagering game system includes a processor 201, which is sometimes called a microprocessor, controller, or central processing unit (CPU). In some embodiments, more than one processor is present, or different types of processors are present in the wagering game system, such as using multiple processors to run gaming code, or using dedicated processors for audio, graphics, security, or other functions. The processor is coupled via a bus 202 to various other components, including memory 203 and nonvolatile storage 204. The nonvolatile storage is able to retain the data stored therein when power is removed, and in various embodiments takes the form of a hard disk drive, nonvolatile random access memory such as a compact flash card, or network-coupled storage. Further

embodiments include additional data storage technologies, such as compact disc, DVD, or HD-DVD storage in the wagering game system.

The bus 202 also couples the processor and components to various other components, such as a value acceptor 205, which is in some embodiments a token
5 acceptor, a card reader, or a biometric or wireless player identification reader. A touchscreen display 206 and speakers 207 serve to provide an interface between the wagering game system and a wagering game player, as do various other components such as buttons 208, pullarms, and joysticks. These components are located in a
10 wagering game machine cabinet such as that of Figure 1 in some embodiments, but can be located in multiple enclosures comprising a wagering game system or outside a wagering game machine cabinet in other embodiments, or in alternate forms such as a wireless or mobile device.

In operation, the wagering game system loads program code from nonvolatile storage 204 into memory 203, and the processor 201 executes the
15 program code to cause the wagering game system to perform desired functions such as to present a wagering game upon which monetary value can be wagered. This and other functions are provided by various modules in the computerized system such as an audio module, a game presentation module, or a touchscreen display module, where such modules comprise in some embodiments hardware, software,
20 mechanical elements, manual intervention, and various combinations thereof.

A network connection enables the wagering game system to communicate with other wagering game network devices, such as a progressive slot area controller or other community game server, an accounting server operable to
25 monitor the security and game activity on wagering game machines, and a game server operable to send game code, multimedia, or other such content to wagering game machines. Connection with the wagering game network servers is typically performed by network methods such as an Ethernet connection, a wireless network connection, or other such connection to facilitate exchange of data.

Figure 3 shows one such example wagering game network. The wagering
30 game machines 301 on the network 302 become aware of the host or wagering game machine server 303 in one embodiment of the invention by receiving a broadcast or

multicast signal from the wagering game server. The signal in one embodiment comprises a network message that identifies the wagering game server, and is received in a wagering game machine 301. The wagering game machine 301 in one such embodiment simply monitors the network for a wagering game system
5 availability broadcast message, and upon receiving one establishes communication with the wagering game server and becomes a part of the wagering game network.

The wagering game machine 301 in some embodiments will not present a wagering game until communication has been established with a wagering game server 303, so that any accounting, tilt, update, configuration, or other such
10 information that is desirably exchanged between the wagering game machine 301 and the wagering game network server 303 before game play can be conducted.

In some further embodiments, the network connection 302 between the wagering game machines 301 and the wagering game network server 303 is encrypted or secured, such as by a negotiated secure connection, or by use of a
15 security certificate or digital signature provided by the wagering game server. In embodiments where the wagering game server's broadcast availability message contains a certificate or digital signature, the authenticity of the wagering game server can be confirmed in the wagering game machine 301 before communication is started.

20 In some embodiments, multiple wagering game servers 303 are present on the wagering game network 302, and communicate with fixed wagering game machines 301, mobile wagering game machines, and other computerized network devices. A message protocol such as Game-to-System (G2S), Best of Breed (BOB), SuperSAS, or any other suitable protocol is used to exchange various types of data
25 between wagering game machines and wagering game network servers. Each wagering game machine may be configured to communicate with only certain wagering game network servers, and will in some such embodiments maintain a list of wagering game network servers with which the wagering game machine should communicate. Broadcast messages from wagering game network servers other than
30 those with which a wagering game machine is configured to communicate will be

disregarded in some such embodiments, and the wagering game machine will continue to monitor the network for configured wagering game network servers.

Figure 4 is a flowchart illustrating one example method of use of server availability broadcast signals to reestablish communications between a wagering game machine and a server. At 401, the wagering game machine is disconnected, and has lost its ability to communicate with the server over a network connection. When connected, the wagering game machine is able in various embodiments to provide accounting information, exchange player tracking information, download game software or other software, media, and firmware, participate in a community game such as progressive area slot game, and to perform other such functions over the network.

Loss of the network connection may be the result of any of a variety of network problems such as a failed router or switch, a rebooting server, a wagering game machine fault or reboot, or a disconnected or noisy network connection. In some embodiments, a network interface adapter in the wagering game machine is able to detect that the network connection has failed, and is able to report the circumstances or conditions surrounding the failure to other wagering game machine hardware and software.

When the wagering game machine detects that the network connection is broken, it begins to listen for server broadcasts at 402. When a server availability broadcast signal is received, it is processed at 403. In one embodiment, the wagering game machine verifies the identity of the wagering game machine, such as by using a digital signature embedded in the broadcast message, and determines whether communication with the identified server is desired. This can also be achieved in another example by use of a configuration table, listing each of the servers with which the wagering game machine is configured to communicate. If the server identified in the server availability broadcast is a server with which the wagering game machine wishes to communicate or is determined to provide a needed service at 404, a connection is attempted at 405.

Once the broadcast message has been processed and the wagering game system has determined that the message is from a valid wagering game server and

that the wagering game machine should establish a connection to the server, the wagering game machine attempts to connect to the server at 405. In some embodiments where the connection to the wagering game network server is not immediately successful, the wagering game machine will again try at various
5 intervals, various numbers of times, and using other varying parameters to make repeated attempts to connect with the wagering game server. If processing the broadcast message reveals that the wagering game network server is not one to which the wagering game machine wishes to connect, the wagering game machine continues to listen for wagering game server broadcast messages at 402.

10 If the attempts to connect to the wagering game server at 405 are determined to be successful at 406, the wagering game system enters a connected state at 408 and is operable to exchange data with the server via the network connection. If the connection attempt is unsuccessful, reconnection is retried until a reconnection attempt count has been exceeded as determined at 407, at which point the wagering
15 game machine returns to 402 and listens for server broadcast availability messages from other servers.

In some embodiments such as where the network connection is noisy or a network element has an intermittent failure, multiple disconnections and reconnections can happen over a short period of time. The number of
20 reconnections, or the interval between reconnection attempts, is limited in some such embodiments to a certain number, is configurable, or changes over time as the wagering game machine continues to try to establish a network connection.

Once the wagering game machine's efforts to reconnect have failed a certain number of times, for a certain amount of time, or according to some other such
25 criteria at 407, the wagering game system listens for a wagering game network server broadcast signal at 402 from either another network server offering the same service, or for the same server in hopes that an intermittent problem such as a reboot have remedied the previous network communications problems. In this state, the wagering game machine monitors the network, listening for a signal from another
30 system that can be identified as a wagering game server, such as by the content of the broadcast signal or by comparison with a list of known wagering game servers

on the network. Certain features of the wagering game machine, such as player tracking or other features, may be suppressed while the wagering game continues to operate in some embodiments. In another example embodiment, the wagering game machine stops game play until a network connection can be reestablished, including
5 some embodiments in which the wagering game machine presents the results of a wagering game whose outcome is determined on a central server.

The flowchart of Figure 4 is altered in some embodiments such that a wagering game machine can operate in more than one of the shown states at a time. For example, a wagering game machine may continue to listen for broadcasts as
10 shown at 402 while in the normal connected mode shown at 408. Similarly, the wagering game machine may continue to listen for broadcast messages from servers at 402 while attempting to connect to servers already discovered at 405. The wagering game system may be considered to be in a disconnected state as is shown at 401 while listening for a wagering game server at 402 such as where no server
15 connection has yet been established, again resulting in multiple states being applicable at a single time.

Figure 5 is an alternate embodiment of an example method of use of server availability broadcast signals to reestablish communications between a wagering game machine and a server, in which the wagering game system attempts
20 reconnection before using server availability broadcast messages to establish a server connection. The computerized wagering game machine again detects that it is disconnected or has become disconnected from one or more wagering game network servers at 501. This is achieved in various embodiments by use of a software or hardware monitoring process, such as a hardware network interface that
25 monitors the status of a network connection and a software module that works with the network hardware interface to monitor the network connection status. In other embodiments, the network connection remains functional, but similar combinations of hardware and software are used to detect loss of a connection to some but not all network connections.

30 At 502, the wagering game system determines whether a reconnection count threshold has been established and exceeded before trying to reconnect with the lost

server at 503. Threshold examples include a limit to the number of attempts, or the time during which a wagering game machine makes continuous attempts, in reconnecting with the wagering game machine server. In one such example, a wagering game machine attempts reconnection continuously for the first 45 seconds
5 after losing a connection, and attempts to reconnect at one minute intervals for the half hour thereafter. After half an hour, the machine attempts to reconnect at five minute intervals until it is reconnected, or simply listens to network traffic for a broadcast message from the server as shown at 506.

The thresholds can be predetermined or preconfigured by the wagering game
10 machine manufacturer, but in other embodiments will be configurable such that a wagering game machine owner or administrator can configure the wagering game machine to operate as desired. In one such example, a wagering game network owner with a small network or a network transitioning to a networked wagering game machine environment may wish to have a machine attempt reconnection at a
15 more relaxed pace than a wagering game facility that relies on the network for credit management through a networked player tracking system. In another example, a wagering game establishment owner may wish to configure machines to operate in a limited mode if the network connection is lost, while other establishment owners may wish to configure their machines to stop conducting wagering games and to
20 display an error message if the network connection is lost.

If the reconnection attempt is successful, normal connected operation resumes at 505, but if the reconnection attempts are unsuccessful, repeated attempts to connect are made as shown at 502, 503, and 504 until the reconnection attempt count has been exceeded.

25 Once the reconnection attempt count is determined to be exceeded at 502, the wagering game machine listens for server availability message broadcasts at 506. A broadcast message comprises in one embodiment a message sent from the wagering game network server with more than one specified recipient, or with no specified recipient. When a server availability broadcast message is received, it is
30 processed as shown at 507, and if the server is in the configuration list or provides a needed service a connection attempt is made at 503. The broadcast message

identifies the server in some embodiments, and identifies server characteristics such as the server function in further embodiments. The wagering game machines in some embodiments maintain a list of wagering game network servers with which the machines communicate, such as by maintaining the Internet Protocol (IP) address of a game content server, a player tracking server, and an accounting server in one example embodiment. If the server doesn't provide a needed service and is not on the wagering game machine's configured server list, the wagering game system resumes listening for server broadcasts at 506.

In a further embodiment, the wagering game machine is able to authenticate the identity of the wagering game server by analyzing a digitally signed message or a digital certificate signed by a trusted authority, such as a wagering game system manufacturer or server software manufacturer. The identity of the server can thereby be confirmed to a relatively high degree of certainty, providing security for communication of wagering game information such as accounting or player tracking data that may be exchanged between wagering game machines and servers in a wagering game network.

If the server broadcast availability message is from a server to which the wagering game machine wishes to connect, the odds of a successful reconnection are high, as the broadcast message from the server indicates that the server is operational and the network connection linking the server to the wagering game machine is operational.

For this reason, wagering game network servers send broadcast messages over the network regularly after rebooting or detecting reconnection to a wagering game network. As the wagering game network server continues to operate normally while attached to the network, the frequency of broadcast messages can be reduced, because the likelihood of wagering game machines waiting to reattach to the server is reduced.

In some embodiments, attempting to connect to a server identified at 507 and 508 is also subject to a connection attempt counter. In such embodiments, an attempt to connect to a discovered server at 503 that is determined to have failed at 504 will result in processing at 502 to determine whether a connection attempt count

has been exceeded. Once the connection attempt count has been reached, the process returns to 506 so that alternate servers can be discovered.

The example of Figure 5 differs from that of Figure 4 in that attempts to reconnect to a lost server are made repeatedly if the reconnect attempt count limit is set to a number other than zero or one, which may result in reestablishing communications with a server more quickly than could be achieved using a broadcast availability message scheme. In other embodiments where a server connection has suffered more than an intermittent failure, attempts to establish a server connection using server availability broadcast messages will likely result in a more rapid network server connection.

Figure 6 is an example of a method that uses both methods in parallel, realizing the advantages of each method in rapidly reestablishing a server connection. A server connection is again initially lost or is not yet established at 601. At 602, the wagering game machine determines whether a connection attempt count has been exceeded, and proceeds to attempt connection at 603, much as in the example of Figure 5. If the connection is determined to be successful at 604, the wagering game machine enters a normal operational state at 605. If the connection attempt fails, the machine attempts reconnection at 603 as long as the attempt count is determined not to have been exceeded at 602.

At the same time as the reconnection process is proceeding in elements 602-605, the wagering game machine is monitoring its network adapter for server broadcast availability messages at 606. If a broadcast availability message is detected, it is received and processed at 607. If the detected server provides a needed service or is on the wagering game machine's server configuration list at 608, a connection is attempted at 603. If a connection to the identified server is not desired, the wagering game system resumes listening for server availability broadcast messages at 606.

In this example, the elements 606 and following can occur at the same time as the elements 602 and following, enabling the wagering game machine to pursue both the process of connection or reconnection to an identified server and the process of listening for server availability broadcast messages at the same time.

When one of the two processes switches to the other process, such as when a connection count is exceeded at 602 or a wagering game server is identified for connection at 608, one of the two processes can execute elements of the other process, either as a single process or in addition to the one or more parallel
5 processes already being run, and may or may not return to its original process elements. For example, while a first process is listening for server broadcasts, receiving and processing them, and determining that they do not identify a server to which the wagering game system needs to connect at 606-608, a separate
10 connection process may enter the listening process 606 as a result of connection attempts exceeded at 602 and return to connection attempts at 603 due to a server being identified at 608. In further embodiments, more than one or two processes may execute at the same time, and processes may join one another or split.

These examples illustrate how various example embodiments of a wagering game machine can use broadcast messages from a wagering game network server to
15 establish a connection or reconnect to the server after a disruption in network communication. The examples presented show how such a system can be used to recover from common faults such as a rebooting server, a network that has been temporarily disconnected, or a failure in network hardware such as a network adapter, switch, or router. Examples of attempting reconnection and listening for
20 server availability broadcast messages in various orders or in parallel have illustrated by way of example some ways in which various embodiments of the invention may be practiced.

Although specific embodiments have been illustrated and described herein, it will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that any arrangement that
25 achieve the same purpose, structure, or function may be substituted for the specific embodiments shown. This application is intended to cover any adaptations or variations of the example embodiments of the invention described herein. It is intended that this invention be limited only by the claims, and the full scope of equivalents thereof.

Claims

1. A computerized wagering game system, comprising:
a gaming module operable to present a wagering game on which monetary
5 value can be wagered; and
a network module operable to detect a wagering game network server
availability broadcast signal.
2. The computerized wagering game system of claim 1, wherein the network
10 module is further operable to connect to the wagering game network server
identified in the availability broadcast signal.
3. The computerized wagering game system of claim 1, wherein the network
module is further operable to recognize whether the wagering game network server
15 availability signal is from an authentic wagering game network server, and to add
the wagering game network server to a wagering game network server list if it is
authentic.
4. The computerized wagering game system of claim 3, wherein recognizing
20 whether the wagering game network server availability signal is from an authentic
wagering game network server comprises evaluating at least one of a digital
signature and an authentication certificate from the wagering game network server.
5. The computerized wagering game system of claim 1, wherein the wagering
25 game system is operable to communicate at least one of accounting information,
wagering game content information, community game information, and game
presentation software over the network with the wagering game network server.
6. A method of operating a computerized wagering game system, comprising:
30 presenting a wagering game on which monetary value can be wagered; and
detecting a wagering game network server availability broadcast signal.

7. The method of operating a computerized wagering game system of claim 6, further comprising connecting to the wagering game network server identified in the availability broadcast signal.

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8. The method of operating a computerized wagering game system of claim 6, further comprising recognizing whether the wagering game network server availability signal is from an authentic wagering game network server, and adding the wagering game network server to a wagering game network server list if it is authentic.

10

9. The method of operating a computerized wagering game system of claim 8, wherein recognizing whether the wagering game network server availability signal is from an authentic wagering game network server comprises evaluating at least one of a digital signature and an authentication certificate from the wagering game network server.

15

10. The method of operating a computerized wagering game system of claim 6, further comprising communicating at least one of accounting information, wagering game content information, community game information, and game presentation software over the network with the wagering game network server.

20

11. A machine-readable medium with instructions stored thereon, the instructions when executed operable to cause a computerized wagering game machine to:

25

present a wagering game on which monetary value can be wagered; and
detect a wagering game network server availability broadcast signal.

12. The machine-readable medium of claim 11, the instructions further operable when executed to cause the computerized wagering game system to connect to the wagering game network server identified in the availability broadcast signal.

30

13. The machine-readable medium of claim 11, the instructions further operable when executed to cause the computerized wagering game system to recognize whether the wagering game network server availability signal is from an authentic
5 wagering game network server, and adding the wagering game network server to a wagering game network server list if it is authentic.

14. The machine-readable medium of claim 13; wherein recognizing whether the wagering game network server availability signal is from an authentic wagering
10 game network server comprises evaluating at least one of a digital signature and an authentication certificate from the wagering game network server.

15. The machine-readable medium of claim 11, the instructions further operable when executed to cause the computerized wagering game system to communicate at
15 least one of accounting information, wagering game content information, community game information, and game presentation software over the network with the wagering game network server.

16. A wagering game network server, comprising:
20 a network module operable to broadcast a wagering game network server availability message over a network.

17. The wagering game network server of claim 16, the network module further operable to communicate with a wagering game system responding to the broadcast
25 availability message.

18. A method of operating a wagering game network server, comprising broadcasting a wagering game network server availability message over a network.

30 19. The method of claim 18, further comprising communicating with a wagering game system responding to the broadcast availability message.

20. A wagering game system, comprising:

a wagering game network server operable to identify itself by sending a
wagering game network server availability broadcast signal over a network; and

5 a wagering game system operable to present a wagering game upon which
monetary value can be wagered and operable to detect the wagering game network
server availability broadcast signal over the network.

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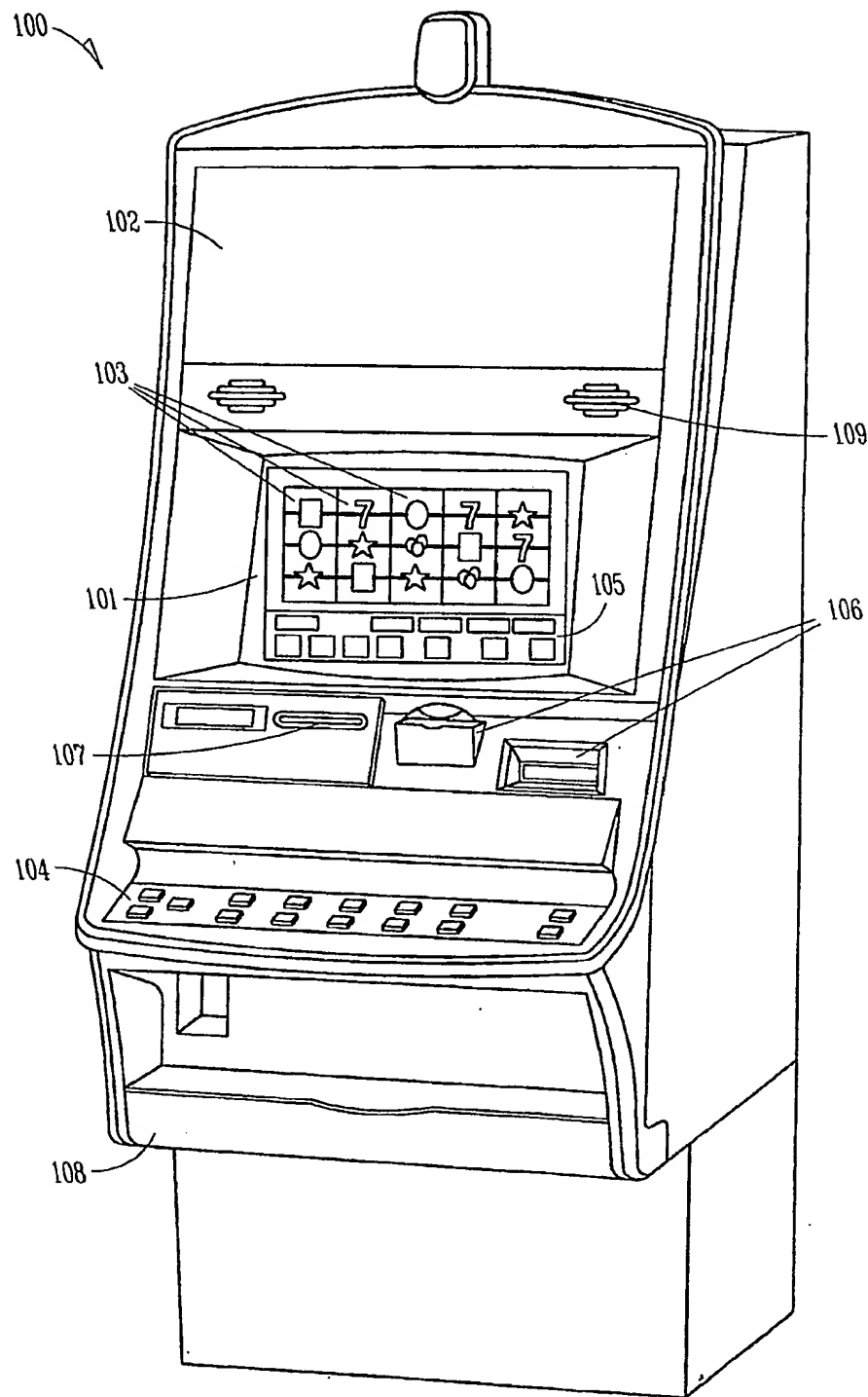


FIG. 1

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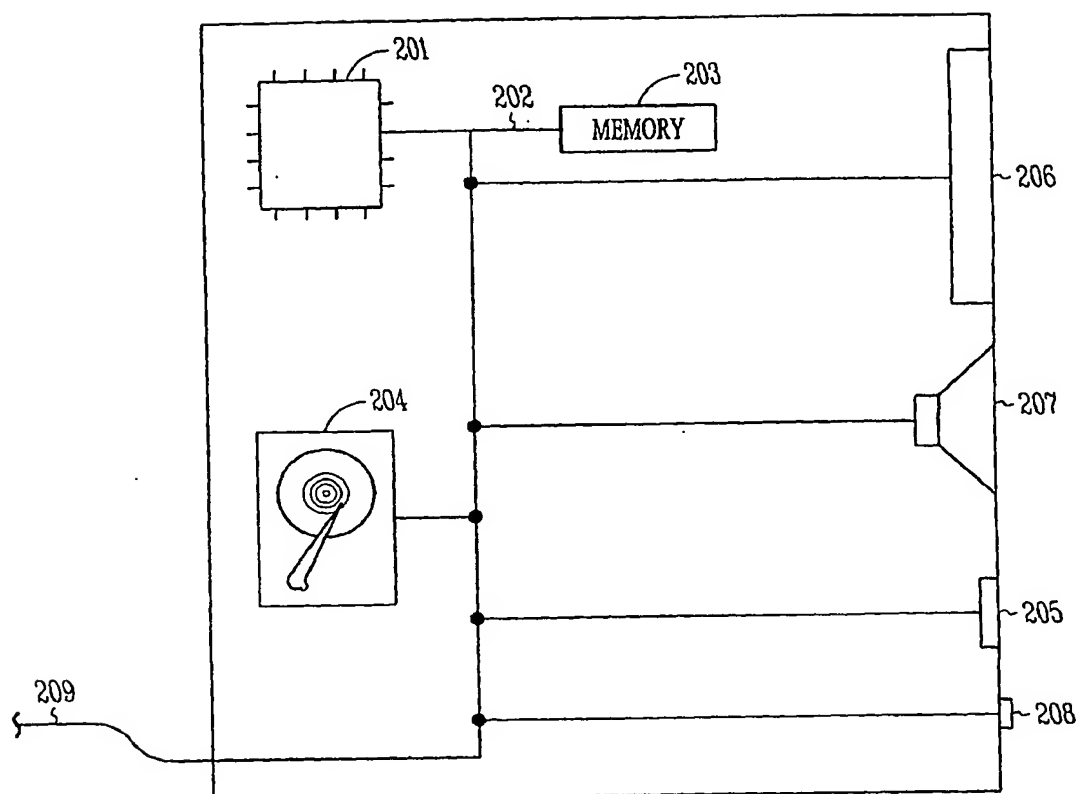
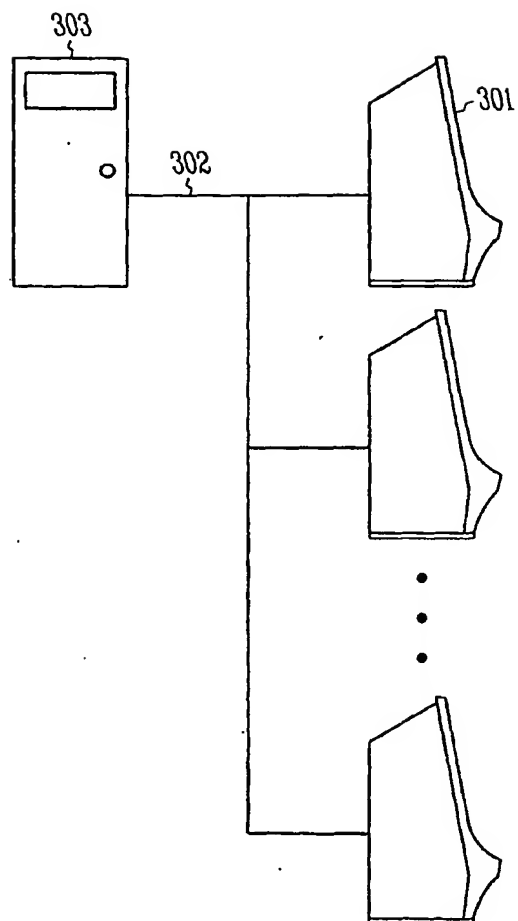
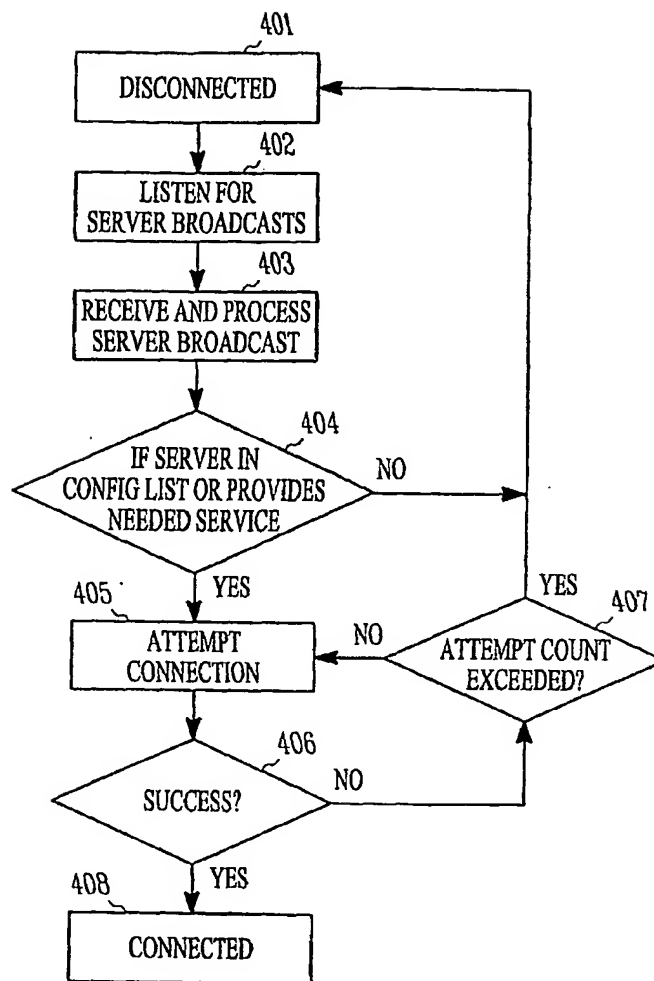


FIG. 2

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**FIG. 3**

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**FIG. 4**

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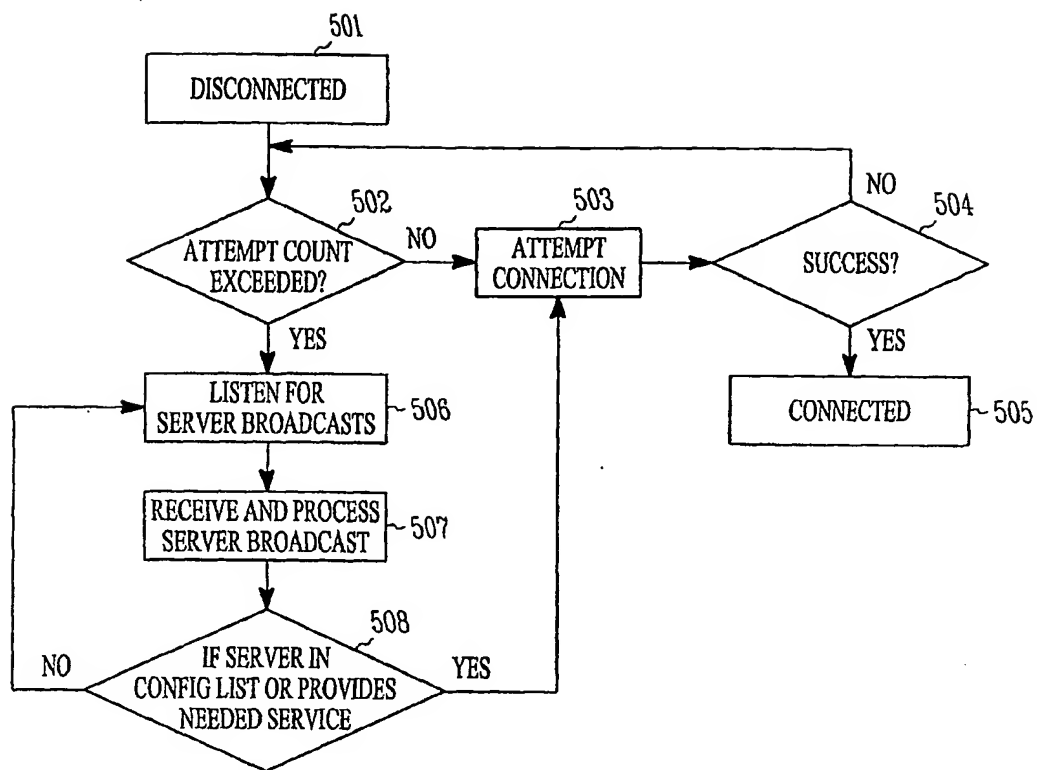


FIG. 5

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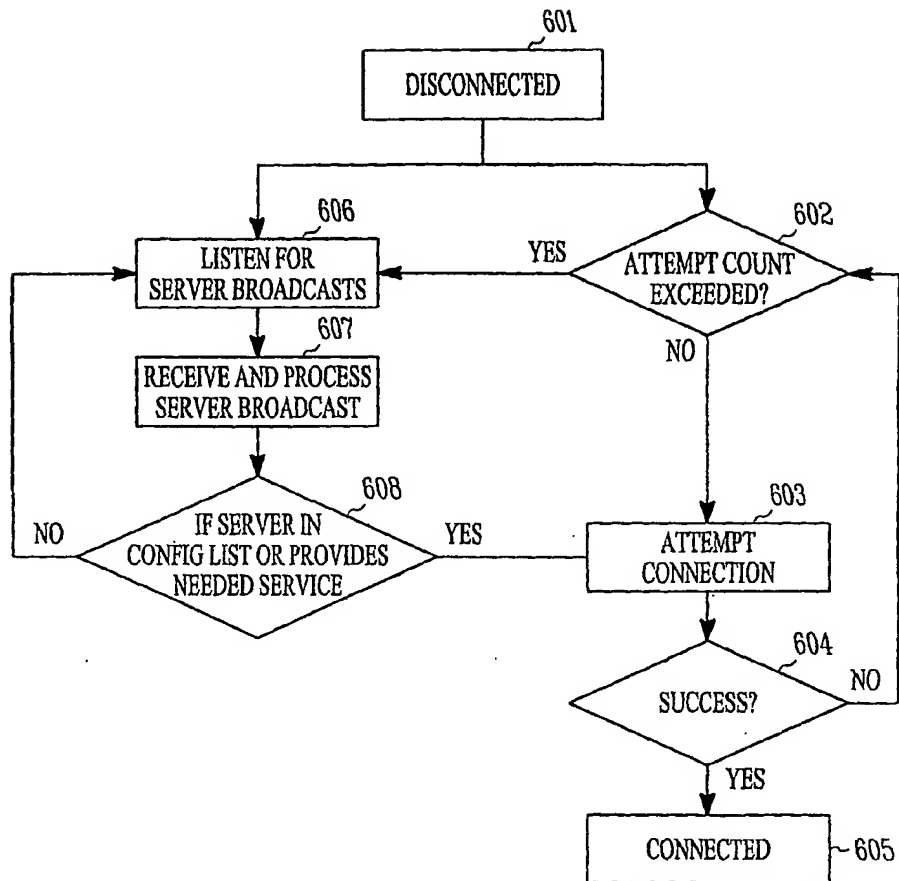


FIG. 6